



# ESTONIA PAST AND PRESENT

MEETING HALL OF THE STATE ASSEMBLY







A Fishing Village in Northern Estonia.

1.45 per cent. of the population are engaged in the Fishing Industry, selling the catch and purchasing necessities chiefly through the intermediary of Fishermen's Co-operatives.



A Typical Wayside Farm in Northern Estonia.

Although peasants after their liberation were compelled to purchase farms at a high price from the big landowners, paying before the World War £ 800,000 p. a. in interest alone, the 50,000 farms thus established are now the backbone of the country's prosperity.

# ESTONIA

## PAST AND PRESENT

### THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA

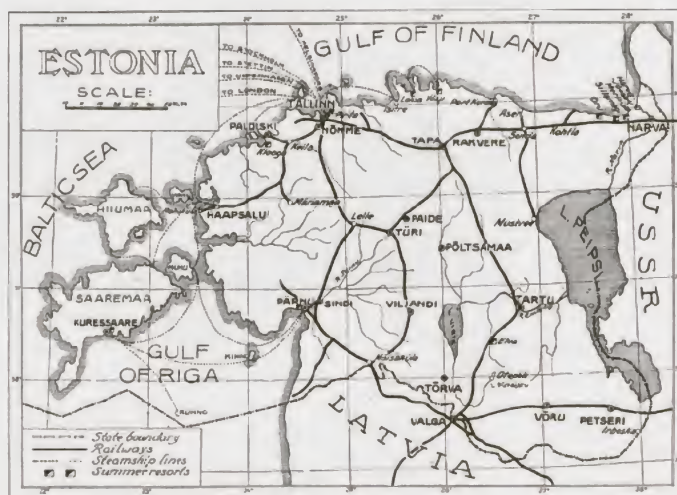
the independence of which was proclaimed on February 24, 1918, comprises the area inhabited by Estonians as a solid national majority.

The country is situated on the east coast of the Baltic sea, and includes 818 islands in the vicinity. It has an area of 47,588.7 sq. km., thus exceeding Denmark, Switzerland, Holland and Belgium. The length of the continental frontier, which is in common with the U. S. S. R. on the east and with the Republic of Lat-

via on the south, is 672.6 km. The continental seaboard totals 1,159.45 km.

Estonia forms a low plain with an average height of 50 metres; there are, however, several

low plateaus with hills, which in the southern part of the country reach a height of about 300 m. Lakes numbering 1512, are a common feature of the Estonian landscape. Of rivers Estonia has but few, only Emajõgi and Narva attaining some importance as interior wateways.





The Castle of Hermann in Narva, on the Western Bank of R. Narva. The 250 ft. Watchtower (built 1549) overlooks the Eastern confines of the country, being separated from Russia by a distance of only 7 miles.



A View of the Hill of Tallinn, ever since 1219 the seat of the Central Administration of Estonia. The Hill is lined by a number of mediaeval Buildings and is protected by a Moat and Bastions, now converted into a delightful Park.

## THE POPULATION

The population of the Republic totalled 1,116,325 on January 1, 1927. The birth-rate in 1925 was 18.3, the death-rate during the same period 14.9 per 1,000 and the average age of deceased 47.6. 47 per cent. of the total population were males and 53 per cent. females.

With regard to nationality, 87.7 per cent. of the population are Estonians, 8.2 per cent. Russians, 1.7 per cent. Germans, 0.7 per cent. Swedes, 0.4 per cent. Jews etc. 59.0 per cent. of the population are engaged in farming, 15.7 employed in industry, 4.2 in commerce and finance. 28.3 per cent. of the population dwell in the 18 cities (the largest being: Tallinn with 125,000 inh., Tartu 60,200, Narva 26,500, Pärnu 21,600, Viljandi 12,000, Valga 14,600, Rakvere 11,600), the rest forming the rural population and the population of the boroughs.

## ESTONIA UNTIL THE NORTHERN WAR

It appears that the Estonians, at that time the most progressive and enterprising of the Western branch of the Finno-Ugric family, settled in the country during the beginning of the Christian era. For twelve centuries they lived in their communities under chiefs or elders, who in time of war often commanded the united forces of the entire country. When in 1208 a Crusade of German Knights of the Sword was formed against this people, the ancient warlike traditions were still active. It was only in 1227 that the entire country was subjugated by the German Order with the assistance of Waldemar II of Denmark, who in 1219 built the Castle of Tallinn.

After an Estonian revolt which they were unable to put down, the Danes sold their Estonian possessions in 1346 to the German Order, who thus obtained the control of the



A View through the Portal of the 15th Century Monastery of St. Bridget near Tallinn, destroyed in 1577 during the Siege of Tallinn by Ivan the Terrible.





Konstantin Päts,

Prime Minister of the Estonian Provisional Government Feb. 24, 1918 to May 9, 1919, Head of the State June 25, 1921 to Nov. 21, 1922 and Aug. 2, 1923 to March 26, 1924. Lawyer and journalist, he was instrumental in securing for the Estonian electors the control of the Tallinn Municipality (1904). During the Revolution of 1905 the Russian Military authorities condemned him to death *in contumaciam*. In 1917 he was one of the most energetic organizers of Estonian troops. He was imprisoned during the German occupation and had upon his release in Nov. 1918 to assume the joint duties of Prime Minister and Minister of War. Thus he was directly responsible for the successful resistance to the Bolshevik invasion of that year. During his subsequent parliamentary career he continued to be a leader of the Peasant Party.

whole territory until 1561, when Ivan the Terrible destroyed the Livonian State. The largest part of the country passed under Sweden. The comparatively mild rule which Estonia and especially her native peasant population subsequently enjoyed, is always spoken of as „the good old Swedish times“.

### ESTONIA UNDER RUSSIAN RULE

Owing to the result of the Northern War Estonia was after 1710 made an autonomous Russian province, not without some co-operation

on the part of the descendants of the German knights, who deprecated the liberal social reforms of the Swedish kings. The privileges of the nobility, such as the right to form a local government and the right of absolute jurisdiction over the peasants were confirmed by the Russian rulers. Only in 1804 were the peasants given the right of private property and inheritance, the sale of landless labourers and of servants still being allowed. Finally, preferring the individual liberation of the peasants to the partial surrender of their rights over peasant property, the nobility in 1816 (in Estonia) and in 1819 (in Livonia) gave freedom to the peasants without giving them any land. Estonian



Lt.-Gen. J. Laidoner,

Commander-in-Chief of the Estonian Forces during the War of Independence. June, 1923 Gen. Laidoner began to take part, as a deputy to the Peasant Party, in the work of the State Assembly. Being elected Chairman of the Foreign Committee and Financial Committee, Gen. Laidoner was one of the Estonian delegates to the Assembly of the League of Nations and twice conducted loan negotiations with Great Britain. In 1925 he was appointed by the Council of the League to the Chairmanship of a Committee of Inquiry in Mossul.



Jaan Poska

Being a distinguished Lawyer, M. Poska, as Mayor of Tallinn, was in 1917 appointed Commissary of the Russian Provisional Government in Estonia. From Feb. 24, 1918 to Nov. 18, 1919 he acted as Foreign Minister, and as representative of the Estonian Government at the Paris Peace Conference. He died in 1920 after having successfully negotiated the Tartu Peace Treaty, which he signed as the leading member of the Estonian delegation.



The March-Past after a Military Tournament

Owing to the international situation Estonia is compelled to maintain a small, but highly-trained conscript force.

history in the 19th century is one desperate struggle of the peasant class for existence and for economic rights. The numerous disabilities of the peasantry lasted until they were finally swept away by the revolution of 1917.

### THE PROCLAMATION OF INDEPENDENCE

In spite of these adverse circumstances great economic and intellectual progress was achieved. Vigorous educational and co-operative movements sprang up.

National consciousness was further developed through the press, the new national literature and through the enthusiastic song festivals. Farmers' societies performed the missing functions of the Local Government, while future deputies received their first training in public duties as members of the municipal councils. Thus the national and democratic ideas of Western Europe gradually permeated the whole mass of the people, who were merely waiting for an opportunity to create conditions of social and political justice.

This opportunity came with the World War. Having contributed their full share of life and property, the Estonians never lost hope that the liberation of hitherto oppressed peoples would be the final result of this terrible struggle. This hope was realized when the events following 1917 finally severed the bonds which connected Estonia with the Russian Empire. Immediately after the overthrow of the Russian Provisional



Members of the Defence Union,

a Voluntary Force under the Minister of War. This Union proved of great usefulness during the initial period of the War of Independence and was thoroughly re-organized after the abortive Communist rising of Dec. 1, 1924. It now counts about 25,000 well-trained members.



Government, the Estonian Diet, elected by universal vote, declared its supreme power and on February 24, 1918, when Tallinn was freed of communist troops, the Independence of Estonia was proclaimed.

## THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

A German occupation soon followed. In November 1918 the country, depleted of arms and food, was open to another Russian invasion. The War of Independence, in which the young national army was victorious, was carried on for thirteen months against overwhelming odds. By February 1919 the country, with the active assistance of a British squadron and numerous Finnish, Danish and Swedish volunteers, was entirely freed of the invaders. During the following months Estonia was even able to help the sister-republic of Latvia, which had to face a still more desperate situation. An armistice with Russia came into force on January 3, 1920 and the Peace Treaty of Tartu, a landmark in the history of Eastern Europe, was signed on February 2. The second article of this Treaty provides for the recognition of the complete independence of the Democratic Republic of Estonia.



Jaan Teemant,

Head of the State since Dec. 15, 1925. A Barrister of distinction, he first attracted wide attention in 1904, when he pleaded for national freedom and social justice. In 1905 he was condemned to death by the Russian military authorities, although being of moderate political views. The farm of his aged father was burnt down as a repressive measure. In 1918-1919 M. Teemant acted as Attorney-General to the Republic.

had to face  
An armistice



The Estonian Theatre in Tallinn

erected in 1913 by public subscription, in spite of the opposition of the Russian governor.

## CONSOLIDATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL POSITION OF ESTONIA

During the following years the international position of Estonia was further consolidated. De jure recognition was first granted by Finland, whose example was followed January 26, 1921 by the principal Allied Powers. In the same year Estonia became a member of the League of Nations and by the end of 1922 she was recognized by all powers including the United States. Continuing the policy of co-operation initiated during the War of Independence, Estonia endeavoured to secure closer co-operation with the Baltic States (Treaty of defensive alliance and economic union with Latvia November 1, 1923; economic treaty with Latvia, February 5, 1927). She maintained and developed friendly relations with the Western

powers and the U. S. S. R., concluding a large number of treaties facilitating trade and international intercourse. In particular she strove, in common with the other Baltic States, to enhance the authority of the League.

## RECONSTRUCTION

Even before peace was concluded, the Estonian Government and the Legislature set to work at the formidable task of



reconstruction. The Constituent Assembly met on April 23, 1919 and passed June 15, 1920 the Constitution which is at present in force. A Land Reform Law was adopted October 10, 1919, treating the most pressing social and economic problems of the country. In 1922 the State budget was definitely balanced and the currency stabilized. Since 1924 the gold value of the Estonian mark has remained stable. In 1925 the annual trade returns for the first time showed a surplus of exports. Thus Estonia succeeded already during the first years of her independence in contributing her share towards the economic and political resettlement of the world.

## THE CONSTITUTION

According to the Constitution, the power of the State is placed in the hands of the people, who



Dr. Fr. Akel,  
Minister for Foreign Affairs since July 23, 1926. Dr. Akel, a prominent member of the Estonian society in Tallinn, took part in parliamentary work as one of the leading members of the Christian People's Party. In 1920 he was appointed Minister for Helsingfors, whence he returned in Aug. 1923, being elected Minister for Foreign Affairs. On March 26, 1924 he was elected Head of the State, remaining at the head of the Executive until Dec. 16, 1924.

effect it (a) by popular referendum, (b) by popular initiative in legislation and (c) by the elections of the State Assembly (Riigikogu). This latter is elected triennially by universal, direct, secret and proportional ballot. It appoints the Head of the State (Riigivanem), the ministers and the members of the State Court of Justice. A special electoral law contains the provision that only parties securing the election of two or more candidates will be considered at the counting of electoral votes. No party or organization may propose their list of candidates, if aiming at the forcible overthrow of the Constitutional order of the Republic, at the abrogation of the independence of the Republic or the separation of a part of its territory, or if conducting propaganda against the independence of the Republic. The Constitution fully



Jaan Tõnisson,  
(on the left)

Became in 1896, after graduating from the Faculty of Law of the Tartu University, the Chief Editor of the „Postimees“, the oldest Estonian daily paper. A publicist of distinction, he soon became a popular tribune, was elected to the first Russian Douma and served his term of imprisonment as one of the signatories of the Viborg manifesto. In 1918 he was sent abroad as one of the envoys of the Estonian Provisional Government and Nov. 1919 was elected Prime Minister, retaining this position until Oct. 1920. He was member of all Estonian Legislatures and represents the People's Party, of which he is the leader, also in the Foreign Committee of the State Assembly.

August Rei,  
(on the right)

one of the leading members of the Estonian Socialist Workers' Party, was elected President of the Constituent Assembly in May 1919 and President of the Second State Assembly in December 1925. He is member of the Committee for Foreign Affairs of the State Assembly.





guarantees the rights of the national minorities, which are further safeguarded by the law, passed in 1925, on the cultural autonomy of national minorities.

## EDUCATION

In spite of adverse economic conditions and the policy of russification pursued by the Russian authorities for over thirty years, the educational standard among the Estonians was relatively high. No efforts were spared after 1919 to maintain and surpass this level. As a consequence of such efforts, the number of pupils in the primary schools (which were made compulsory) increased 13.1 per cent., that in the secondary schools 42.5 per cent. after 1919. 1,100 million marks or nearly 15 per cent. of the national budget are spent each year by the Government and the local authorities for educational purposes. According to the census of 1922 illiterates amounted to 5.9 per cent. and were mostly found among the Russian peasant population along the eastern frontier. The University of Tartu, founded in 1632 by Gustavus Adolphus,



Main Building of the Tartu University

The University Statutes were signed by Gustavus Adolphus in 1632, while the King was camping at Nuremberg. The University was reopened by Alexander I in 1802 and became the National University of Estonia in 1919.

numbered December 1, 1926 4,651 students or 423 students per 100,000 inhabitants, as against 147 in Sweden, 145 in Germany, 130 in Finland etc. The total number of university graduates in Estonia is nearly 5,000. Of these, 1,013 had completed the course of the Tartu university between 1923 and 1926.

The number of newspapers published in Estonia is 56, that of other periodicals 104. The total number of copies of each issue being about 300,000, there is an average of 1.2 copies of periodicals per dwelling. An average of 800 books is published every year, of which 720 are original works in Estonian.

## NATIONAL ECONOMY

Agriculture is the most productive branch of national economy, the total value of the annual output of agricultural products attaining in 1926 a value of 26.875 billion marks. The industrial output is estimated at 10 billion marks. The foreign trade returns of the last three years are (in millions marks):



Mass Exercises by Students of the Secondary Schools in Tallinn

Estonia has 86 Secondary Schools with a total of nearly 19,000 pupils. Athletics occupy a prominent place in school life, national contests being organized in field athletics, football, basket-ball and volley-ball.



The Tallinn Stadium,

where all important athletic events of the country take place. It is controlled by the Estonian National Athletic League and was built in 1923-25 on the site where the 8th National Singing Festival was organized in 1923. The stand for a choir of 13,000 singers now provides sitting accommodation for the public.



|            | Exports | Imports |
|------------|---------|---------|
| 1924 . . . | 7,894.0 | 8,210.3 |
| 1925 . . . | 9,691.5 | 9,672.5 |
| 1926 . . . | 9,653.3 | 9,559.1 |

The balance of foreign payments during the same years was estimated as follows (in millions of marks):

|          | Capital paid | Capital received |
|----------|--------------|------------------|
| 1924 . . | 9,093.4      | 9,511.8          |
| 1925 . . | 10,962.0     | 11,121.9         |
| 1926 . . | 10,708.6     | 11,460.8         |

The export trade of Estonia is characterized by the following figures (in millions of marks):

|                         | 1925  | %%   | 1926  | %%   |
|-------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|
| Agricultural products   | 4,342 | 45.0 | 4,497 | 46.7 |
| Industrial articles . . | 4,050 | 41.9 | 3,715 | 38.5 |
| Timber . . . . .        | 1,212 | 12.5 | 1,332 | 13.8 |
| Various foodstuffs . .  | 60    | 0.6  | 93    | 1.0  |
|                         | 9,664 | 100  | 9,637 | 100  |



One of the Experimental Fields of the Estonian Seed Company

The Estonian Government has steadily favoured and supported all private and co-operative Organizations aiming at the development of the agricultural resources of the country. The development of agricultural co-operatives was considered to be of special importance because of the radical changes wrought in the distribution of landed property by the Agrarian reform of 1919.



The Sky-Line of Tallinn, the Capital of Estonia

The chief articles of import are stated below (in millions of marks):

|   | 1925  | %%   | 1926  | %%   |
|---|-------|------|-------|------|
| Foodstuffs, beverages, tobacco . . . . .              | 3,295 | 34.1 | 3,429 | 35.9 |
| Raw materials and semi - manufactured goods . . . . . | 2,542 | 26.3 | 2,044 | 21.4 |
| Manufactured goods                                    | 3,817 | 39.6 | 4,077 | 42.7 |
| Live stock . . . . .                                  | 1     | —    | 6     | —    |
|   | 9,655 | 100  | 9,556 | 100  |

The chief customer of Estonia in 1926

was Great Britain, importing Estonian goods to the value of 2,768.7 million marks or 28.8 per cent. of the total export. Germany was next with 2,227.5 millions and 23.1 per cent. She is followed by the U. S. S. R., which absorbed 1,238.1 million marks (12.9 per cent.).

The list of exporters of goods to the Estonian market is headed by Germany (2,783.8 millions or 29.1 per cent.). Next come Great Britain (1,158.8 millions or 12.1 per cent.), the United States (1,141.8 millions or 11.9 per cent.) and Poland (992.5 millions or 10.4 per cent.).



Air View of one of the Shipbuilding Yards in Tallinn

## AGRICULTURE

According to the cadastral figures the different classes of land and their uses are as follows:

|             | Agricultural land |           |           | Forest  | Other land | Total     |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|-----------|
|             | Tillage           | Meadows   | Pasturage |         |            |           |
| In hectares | 1,024,845         | 1,052,957 | 743,063   | 898,279 | 660,439    | 4,349,583 |
| In %        | 23.4              | 24.0      | 17.0      | 20.5    | 15.1       | 100       |

Before the World War and until 1919 most of this land — as much as 58.0 per cent. of the total area — was occupied by the large landowners. In consequence of the land reform law of 1919, 96.6 per cent. of the total area of the large estates was nationalized. A compensation law was passed by the State Assembly in 1926, providing for payment according to the real value of land at the time of nationalization. By 1927 a total of about 40,000 new farms has been created, finally doing away with social unrest, which in Estonia has always been connected with the land question.

As was expected by the authors of the reform, this act of social justice was accompanied by



Girl Students of an Agricultural School at Work

The High Standard of General Education has enabled the Estonian Educational Authorities to concentrate during the last years on the problem of Vocational Training. Agriculture being the main branch of production, a Faculty of Agriculture at the Tartu university, two agricultural Colleges and 15 agricultural Schools have been instituted since 1918.





A Rural Flax Mill,  
owned by the flax-growing peasants of the district. The works clean  
flax fibre for export and extract linseed oil for the production of varnish.

a considerable intensification of agricultural  
production and of dairy farming. The increase  
of livestock may be seen from the following table:

| Years | Horses  | Cattle  |         | Sheep   | Pigs    |
|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|       |         | Total   | Cows    |         |         |
| 1914  | 164,545 | 478,480 | 247,852 | 518,439 | 274,549 |
| 1920  | 167,550 | 465,100 | 249,795 | 551,536 | 266,646 |
| 1924  | 208,076 | 512,225 | 321,245 | 608,598 | 287,597 |
| 1926  | 226,300 | 599,100 | 379,800 | 665,900 | 333,100 |

Thus Estonia had in 1926 28 per cent. more  
horses, 43 per cent. more cows, 23 per cent.  
more sheep and 15 per cent. more pigs than  
before the World War. The yield of forage  
crops increased in proportion (in tons):



Pasture

Estonia has a total of 380,000 cows, more than a quarter of which  
is under the control of inspecting societies.

|            | 1914    | Average<br>1920—<br>1924 |         | 1925    | 1926 |
|------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|---------|------|
|            |         |                          |         |         |      |
| Barley . . | 121,200 | 114,000                  | 115,159 | 131,474 |      |
| Oats . .   | 130,100 | 136,010                  | 126,611 | 133,106 |      |
| Mix. grain | —       | 52,533                   | 60,375  | 73,766  |      |
| Potatoes . | 736,400 | 712,445                  | 649,707 | 925,895 |      |
| Turnips .  | —       | 53,003                   | 114,082 | 123,673 |      |

In spite of the growth of dairy farming the  
crops of food, grain, and flax have been main-  
tained on the average pre-war level or have  
even surpassed it:

|            | 1914    | Average<br>1920—<br>1924 |         | 1925    | 1926 |
|------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|---------|------|
|            |         |                          |         |         |      |
| Rye . . .  | 152,200 | 170,100                  | 182,563 | 114,100 |      |
| Wheat . .  | 8,800   | 7,000                    | 21,530  | 23,900  |      |
| Linseed .  | 14,100  | 12,500                   | 12,370  | 12,120  |      |
| Flax fibre | 16,000  | 12,900                   | 13,623  | 9,900   |      |

The progress of dairy farming resulted in a con-  
tinuous increase of Estonian butter exports,  
which reached in 1926 a total of 8,691 tons  
as against 6,445 tons in the previous year, 2,347  
tons in 1923 and only 127.8 tons in 1921. This  
development would have been impossible but  
for the existence of a vigorous



A Thrashing Machine in Action

Whenever the cost of an agricultural machine exceeds the means of  
the would-be buyer, he purchases it through one of the 800 co-operative  
societies for the use of agricultural machinery.



Cement Works with an Annual Output of 400,000 barrels.

## CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

Although the first co-operative enterprise was established only in 1902, their number in Estonia has by 1924 reached and since then surpassed 2,000, doubling the pre-war figure. The membership of these co-operative enterprises is nearly 300,000 or 27 per cent. of the total population of the country.

Consumers' societies, co-operative banks, co-operative dairies, co-operatives societies for the use of agricultural machinery, co-operative insurance societies and fishermen's societies are the most common and popular types of co-operative organizations. All these groups of co-operative enterprise have their central national organizations, which in some branches of commerce and production have attained a position of virtual monopoly. Thus over  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the butter exported by Estonia in 1925 and 1926 was handled by the central society of co-operative dairies, known as „Estonia Ltd.“ At the same time the Co-operative Wholesale Society (E.T.K.) secured a similar position with regard to the sale of fertilizers.



The Kraenholm Cotton Mills at Narva, with 500,000 spindles and 4,000 looms one of the largest mills in the world. The falls on the R. Narva provide the energy.

## INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

The restoration of equipment evacuated during the war and finding of new markets are problems which are still troubling Estonian manufacturers. By 1927 only 34,800 workers as against 46,700 before the World War were employed in factories. The most important among these latter were:

|                                    | Hands employed<br>in 1927 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 Cotton Mills . . . . .           | 4,850                     |
| 3 Woollen Manufactures . . . . .   | 1,638                     |
| 5 Flax Mills . . . . .             | 1,229                     |
| 1 Wood-Working Concern . . . . .   | 1,569                     |
| 5 Paper Mills . . . . .            | 1,904                     |
| 5 Match Factories . . . . .        | 1,050                     |
| 4 Railway Carriage Works . . . . . | 1,625                     |
| 5 Shipbuilding Yards . . . . .     | 1,210                     |
| 4 Oil Shale Mines . . . . .        | 1,568                     |

Estonia has also a very important alcohol industry which uses potatoes as raw material.

The development of industrial production from 1922 to 1925 is shown in the following table (in millions Est. marks):



|      | Gross value<br>of produced<br>goods              | Payment recei-<br>ved for wor-<br>king up mate-<br>rials belonging<br>to other persons | Value of<br>materials<br>used | Value added<br>by manufac-<br>ture (net<br>production) | Wages<br>paid |
|------|--|--|-------------------------------|--|---------------|
|      | A. Enterprises employing more than<br>20 workers |  |                               |  |               |
| 1922 | 5,226  |  | 2,511                         | 2,715  | 1,115         |
| 1923 | 7,817  |  | 4,461                         | 3,356  | 1,463         |
| 1924 | 8,633  |  | 4,793                         | 3,840  | 1,548         |
| 1925 | 10,047   |  | 5,767                         | 4,280  | 1,621         |
|      | B. Enterprises employing 5-20 workers            |  |                               |  |               |
| 1924 | 1,004  |  | 514                           | 490  | 241           |
| 1925 | 994  |  | 478                           | 516  | 235           |

The development of production in the various branches of industry may be seen from the following figures:

|                          | 1925    | 1924    | 1923   | 1922   | 1921   |
|--------------------------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| <b>Textile Industry</b>  |         |         |        |        |        |
| Cotton fabrics (1000     | 4,518   | 3,264   | 3,416  | 2,868  | 1,556  |
| Linen . . . . yds.)      | 881     | 1,37    | 1,342  | 1,046  | 712    |
| Jute fabrics . . do.     | 1,003   | —       | —      | —      | —      |
| Cloth . . . . do.        | 317     | 364     | 483    | 325    | 425    |
| Cotton yarn . do.        | 27,460  | 19,023  | 30,573 | 20,409 | 12,726 |
| Sewing thread (1000      | 19      | 25      | 19     | 11     | —      |
| gross)                   |         |         |        |        |        |
| <b>Paper Industry</b>    |         |         |        |        |        |
| Paper (1000 tons) .      | 384     | 298     | 260    | 256    | 173    |
| Pulp do. .               | 163     | 133     | 96     | 73     | 54     |
| Cellulose do. .          | 189     | 159     | 94     | 114    | 50     |
| <b>Timber Industry</b>   |         |         |        |        |        |
| Sawn Timber (stan-       |         |         |        |        |        |
| dards) . . . .           | 61,550  | 62,776  | 58,285 | 33,951 | 19,170 |
| Chair Bottoms (1000)     | 5,633   | 4,104   | 3,704  | 2,600  | 2,216  |
| Ply-Wood Articles        |         |         |        |        |        |
| (1000) . . . . .         | 120     | 84      | 49     | 43     | 28     |
| <b>Chemical Industry</b> |         |         |        |        |        |
| Matches (1000 boxes)     | 207,393 | 122,923 | 73,693 | 61,444 | 38,58  |
| Varnish (tons) . . .     | 764     | 695     | 433    | 358    | 383    |
| Oil-Cakes do. . . .      | 2,620   | 2,516   | 1,711  | 1,171  | 722    |
| <b>Leather Industry</b>  |         |         |        |        |        |
| Large Hides (1000) .     | 139     | 103     | 123    | 128    | —      |
| Small Hides (1000) .     | 156     | 171     | 229    | 286    | —      |
| Footwear (1000 pairs)    | 283     | 233     | 227    | 109    | —      |
| <b>Cement Industry</b>   |         |         |        |        |        |
| Cement (1000 tons) .     | 380     | 338     | 363    | 192    | 82     |

While generally, owing to the difficulties already mentioned, industrial production has not reached the pre-war level, some industries, viz. paper, match and footwear industries, have actually surpassed it. The growth of industrial production was much facilitated by the increased exploitation of oil shale, which helped to solve the problem of cheap local fuel.

## THE OIL SHALE INDUSTRY

Estonia has a considerable supply of this useful mineral. It is estimated at 3,870 million tons. Although the exploitation of the seams started only in 1919, when no more than 9,648 tons were obtained, production rapidly increased and reached 432,000 tons in 1926. In future the main importance of oil shale will be due to the oil which may be obtained from it. In 1926, however, the existing distilleries extracted only about 6,000 tons of crude oil to the value of 23 million Estonian marks, while 296,258 tons of shale, valued at 150 million Estonian marks, were sold as fuel to the industries.

The importance of oil shale as a national fuel is seen from the following table, showing the quantities used during recent years (in tons):



A Specimen of Estonian Forest



The Harbour of Tallinn

|                                    | 1923    | 1924    | 1925    | 1926    | Total<br>1918-1926 |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------------|
| Railways . . .                     | 34,334  | 46,566  | 88,642  | 148,696 | 351,723            |
| Cement Factories                   | 103,048 | 42,283  | 79,199  | 85,049  | 473,793            |
| Other Industries                   | 16,570  | 40,054  | 47,935  | 46,854  | 180,263            |
| Used for Oil Ex-<br>traction . . . | 2,367   | 6,696   | 18,746  | 39,601  | 65,592             |
| Used by Small<br>Consumers . .     | 2,267   | 5,563   | 14,876  | 16,312  | 59,528             |
| Used by the Oil<br>Shale Industry  | 9,549   | 8,954   | 13,108  | 9,159   | 49,300             |
| Total . . . . .                    | 168,138 | 145,617 | 262,509 | 345,674 | 1,180,204          |

During all these years the importance of oil shale in relation to other fuel used by the industry has likewise been on the increase. This may be seen from the following table:

| Description<br>of Fuel                 | Percentage of the total annual consump-<br>tion of fuel by the industries |      |      |      |      |      |
|--|---|------|------|------|------|------|
|  | 1925  | 1924 | 1923 | 1922 | 1921 | 1920 |
| Firewood .                             | 22.4  | 32.3 | 41.2 | 53.9 | 71.4 | 87.9 |
| Blockwood                              | 1.8   | 1.2  | 1.0  | 1.5  | 1.9  | 0.5  |
| Peat . . .                             | 11.5  | 13.0 | 5.2  | 8.0  | 12.7 | 4.6  |
| Coal . . .                             | 26.6  | 25.8 | 29.3 | 22.9 | 22.6 | 2.3  |
| Oil Shale .                            | 36.2  | 25.9 | 20.9 | 11.5 | 10.1 | 3.3  |
| Other kinds<br>of fuel .               | 1.5   | 1.8  | 2.4  | 2.2  | 1.3  | 1.4  |
| Total                                  | 100   | 100  | 100  | 100  | 100  | 100  |
| Increase of<br>the total<br>(1920=100) | 170   | 161  | 165  | 144  | 121  | 100  |





The Harbour of Tallinn in Winter

The port of Tallinn is kept open during Winter months by powerful Icebreakers and is accessible to ships all the year round.

This table, where various kinds of fuel are compared according to their heat value, shows that the increased use of oil shale greatly reduced the use of firewood and checked the increase in the use of coal. Peat, of which Estonia has a great abundance, filled the same useful role, though on a smaller scale.

### „INVISIBLE EXPORTS“

The favourable geographical position of Estonia and the accessibility of the principal ports throughout the winter has made her one of the chief trade routes between East and West. From the moment when peace was concluded with the Soviet Republic, Estonia considered herself as a country of free transit. While no effort was spared to repair and perfect the condition of Estonian ports and railways, as a result of which the port of Tallinn has doubled its working capacity, it is impossible to deny that the country has reaped so far little benefit from her role of intermediary. The total gross income from the transit trade is figured at 112.4 million marks in 1926, whereas the total gross income from foreign travellers and tourists was about four times higher. Other positive items of the balance of foreign payments, besides



Ships entering the Harbour of Tallinn in Winter

the biggest item represented by the export trade, were the earnings of the little merchant marine and the remittances of Estonians abroad, both of which were estimated at 450 millions in 1926.

### PUBLIC FINANCE

In spite of great initial difficulties — in 1918 the Estonian Provisional Government set to work with practically no funds in the Treasury and with no sound foreign currency in the country — the State budget was balanced as early as 1922, yielding during that year a surplus of revenue to the amount of 1,566.5 million marks. With the accumulated surpluses of the following



The Government Oil Shale Distillery at Kohtla



Otto Strandman,

distinguished Lawyer and Politician, was elected Prime Minister in May 1919, remaining in Office until November of the same year. In March 1924 M. Strandman was elected Minister for Foreign Affairs, in May 1924 Minister of Finance. In this latter capacity he finally stabilized the Estonian mark. In 1927 he was appointed Estonian Minister to Warsaw.

years the Government by 1927 effected forced savings amounting to about 2,650 millions, which considerably facilitated the task of reconstruction. The new national currency had to be introduced during the War of Independence without any proper backing. It was put on a stable foundation in 1921—22, as a result of the revival of foreign trade and of the payment by Russia, under the Terms of the Tartu Peace Treaty, of £ 1,500,000 in gold as part compensation for nationalized Estonian property. Ever since 1924 the Estonian mark has been kept perfectly stable at 372.0 to the dollar.

This stabilization was achieved without any foreign assistance. Only in 1926 did the Estonian Government take the first steps toward securing



Leo Sepp,

Minister of Finance since December 1924. M. Sepp vigorously continued the financial policy of M. Strandman and signed Dec. 10, 1926 in Geneva, on behalf of the Estonian Government, the Protocol on the Currency and Banking Reform in Estonia. In the beginning of 1927 he submitted to the State Assembly the Currency Reform Laws provided for in the Protocol, with the result that they were adopted on May 3, 1927.

a foreign loan in order to effect a banking and currency reform which gained the approval of the Financial Committee of the League of Nations. The success of the loan served to show the confidence which the previous financial policy of the Estonian Government had inspired on the part of the international money market.

## BANKING

There is every reason to believe that the carrying out of the banking and currency reform will be considered as an additional security and inducement to investors and the saving public. As a consequence the amount of investments and bank deposits is expected to show a further



increase. But even the amount of deposits placed before the reform laws were passed by the State Assembly shows that this manner of investment was considered as perfectly safe. In 1923 the average amount of deposits was 2,550 million marks. By May 1, 1927 this amount has increased to a total of 3,959.1 millions of private deposits. During the same period the total balances of the banks rose from 12,283 million marks to 17,400 millions.

### A SYNOPSIS

This booklet, compiled from official data, is not meant to propound official optimism. It is to convey to its reader a few hard facts and some exact figures. These speak a distinct language of their own. A stable democratic Government has been set up where there was turmoil and insecurity. Free education in the mother tongue exists in place of a forcible suppression of national cul-



David and Goliath,  
a 15th Century Wood Relief  
in the Town Hall Building  
of Tallinn, erected in 1350,  
and rich in objects of anti-  
quarian interest.

ture. Conditions of social justice have supplanted the disabilities under which the huge majority of the people had suffered. At the same time the reconstruction of material wealth has been carried out with thoroughly commendable results. A great work has been performed during this period which will soon be called a decade. It would be unjust, however, to appreciate this work only according to point the immediate results for it is still continuing and will never cease, primarily aiming at a national ideal — an effort „to create a State based on justice, law, and liberty, for the defence of internal and external peace, as a pledge for the social progress and general welfare of present and future generations“ (preamble of the Constitution of June 15, 1920). It is in their work for this ideal that the Estonian people endeavour to justify their national Independence.

Glimpses of mediaeval Tallinn, much frequented by tourists



A 15th Century House



Church of St. Nicholas,  
built in the 14th Century



The Old Town Wall

p. 3, 45 p.





THE CASTLE IN TALLINN





THE CASTLE IN TALLINN